

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /016 R

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APPROVED BY:ARA:MR. LUERS

S/S-O:DLMACK

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R 030503Z APR 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

S E C R E T STATE 080378

EXDIS

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM PORT AU PRINCE DATED MARCH 19, 1976
SENT SECSTATE WASHDC IS REPEATED TO YOU: QUOTE

S E C R E T PORT AU PRINCE 0727

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FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1 (DATE IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE)

TAGS: MARR, MASS, MILI, PINS, HA, CU

SUBJ: HEIGHTENED HAITIAN CONCERN OVER CUBAN TENSIONS AND
PROPOSED STEPS TO DEAL WITH IT

1. AS SENIOR OFFICIALS IN HAITIAN GOVERNMENT HAVE WEIGHED
THE REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF FURTHER CUBAN ADVENTURES,
THEY HAVE WONDERED HOW HAITI'S SMALL, UNDER EQUIPPED
FORCES COULD HOLD OFF ANY CUBAN ASSAULT UNTIL THE ARRIVAL
OF OUTSIDE HELP PROVIDED UNDER RIO TREATY PROVISIONS.
THE HAITIANS DO NOT DOUBT THAT (AT LEAST FROM US SIDE)
A FORCEFUL REACTION WOULD BE PROMPTLY FORTHCOMING.
THEY HAVE TAKEN CAREFUL NOTE OF THE PRESIDENT'S AND THE
SECRETARY'S RECENT STRONG WARNINGS TO CUBA. HOWEVER,
THE HAITIANS ARE UNCERTAIN AS TO HOW QUICKLY A RESPONSE

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EITHER FROM UNITED STATES OR WITHIN OAS FRAMEWORK

COULD OCCUR AND ARE UNCLEAR AS TO WHAT FORM SUCH A RESPONSE MIGHT TAKE. THE HAITIANS THESE DAYS FEEL PARTICULARLY NAKED IN FRONT OF A LONG-TIME IDEOLOGICAL ENEMY JUST ACROSS THE WINDWARD PASSAGE -- AN ENEMY WHOS COMBAT SKILLS AND LOGISTIC CAPACITIES NOW COMPEL INCREASED RESPECT AND WHOS INTENTIONS ABOUT USING HIS EXPEDITIONARY FORCES CLOSER TO HOME APPEAR MENACING. THESE ARE NOT FRIVOLOUS CONCERNS.

2. BOTH IN A MARCH 8 CONVERSATION WITH THE VISITING CHAIRMAN OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEFENSE BOARD (IADB), GNERAL SUMNER, AND IN A MESSAGE RELAYED TO ME ON MARCH 12 BY FONMIN BRUTUS, PRESIDENT DUVALIER HAS EXPRESSED URGENT CONCERN ABOUT CUBAN INTENTIONS AND US REACTION CAPABILITIES. HE HAS INQUIRED WHETHER, IN THE FACE OF SUCH A DANGER, USG MIGHT CONSIDER MAKING AVAILABLE TO HAITI APPROPRIATE ITEMS OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT WHICH WOULD PERMIT A MORE EFFECTIVE HAITIAN DEFENSE UNTIL OUTSIDE HELP COULD ARRIVE. DUVALIER WAS NOT SPECIFIC EITHER AS TO THE ITEMS DESIRED OR AS TO THE DEGREE OF US TRAINING OR ADVICE HE CONTEMPLATED.

3. GEN. SUMNER AND I SEPARATELY DEALT WITH THESE REPRESENTATIONS IN MANNER APPROPRIATE TO THE CIRCUMSTANCES. THE GENRAL EMPHASIZED THAT THE IADB WAS NOW IN PROCESS OF A CONTINGENCY PLANNING EXERCISE DIRECTED AT JUST SUCH A CONTINGENCY AND INTENDED TO PROVIDE A BASIS FOR A MORE ACCURATE ASSESSMENT OF HOW IADB COULD CONTRIBUTE TO COLLECTIVE SECURITY MEASURES UNDER RIO TREATY. IN MY RESPONSE TO BRUTUS, I LAID STRESS UPON THE SECRETARY'S RECENT AND CATEGORICAL STATEMENTS AS TO THE UNACCEPTABILITY OF ANOTHER ANGOLA, DREW ATTENTION TO US INTELLIGENCE RESOURCES WORLD-WIDE, AND NOTED, AS PARTICULARLY RELEVANT TO HAITIAN CONCERNS, THE PROXIMITY OF US BASES AT GUANTANAMO AND ROOSEVELT ROADS.

4. THESE OBSERVATIONS, WE WOULD JUDGE, HAVE SERVED TO ABAT HAITIAN APPREHENSIONS. NEVERTHELESS, WE SHOULD CONSIDER FURTHER AND MORE SYSTEMATIC MEASURES DESIGNED

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TO RESPOND TO THE LEGITIMATE ANXIETIES OF THE HAITIANS, GIVE WEIGHT TO OUR RECENTLY REAFFIRMED MUTUAL SECURITY COMMITMENTS, AND DEFLECT GOH FROM ANY ILL-ADVISED OR HASTY MILITARY PROCUREMENT. OUR OBJECTIVE HOULD BE TO PROVIDE SENIOR HAITIAN OFFICIALS WITH A MORE REALISTIC AND SOPHISTICATED APPRECIATION OF

(A) CUBAN POLITICAL-MILITARY INTENTIONS AND

CAPABILITIES; AND

(B) US INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITIES AND MILITARY OPTIONS IN EVENT OF (I) ANY OUTRIGHT CUBAN ASSAULT ON HAITI, AND (II) INFILTRATION OF ARMED CUBANS INTO HAITI TOGETHER WITH DISSIDENT HAITIAN EXILES, IN A SERIES OF SMALL INCURSIONS.

IN SHORT, WE CONTEMPLATE A LOW-KEY, INFORMAL, BUT CONSISTENT AND HIGH-LEVEL PROCESS OF EDUCATION AND CONSULTATION.

5. WE PROPOSE THE FOLLOWING PRINCIPAL ELEMENTS IN SUCH A PROCESS:

(A) THE INITIATION OF PERIODIC BRIEFING ON CUBAN POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS TO BE PRESENTED, AT LEAST AT THE OUTSET, BY QUALIFIED TDY BRIEFING OFFICERS, E.G. DRAWN FROM STAFFS OF INR, CIA, OR CINCLANT;

(B) AN INCREASE TEMPO OF VISITS TO HAITI BY SENIOR US MILITARY OFFICERS WITH REGIONAL COMMAND RESPONSIBILITIES, E.G. ADMIRAL KIDD (CINCLANTFLT), LTG MACAULIFFE (USCINCSOUTHCOM), ADMIRAL FLANAGAN (COMANTDEFCON). GEN. MACAULIFFE, FOR EXAMPLE, ALREADY PLANS A VISIT THIS SPRING AND WE WOULD ENVISAGE UTILIZING HIS VISIT AND THOSE OF OTHERS AS OCCASIONS TO STRENGTHEN THE PROCESS OF CONSULTATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OBJECTIVES OUTLINED ABOVE.

(C) THE INTRODUCTION OF AN AUGMENTED AND CAREFULLY SELECTED PATTERN OF VISIT BY APPROPRIATE NAVAL UNITS, AND PERHAPS BY AN F-4 SQUADRON, DESIGNED TO ENHANCE GOH APPRECIATION OF US
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NAVAL AND AIR CAPACITY.

6. ACTION REQUESTED: I WOULD APPRECIATE THE DEPARTMENT'S REACTION TO THE FOREGOING ASSESSMENT AND TO THE COURSE OF ACTION OUTLINED ABOVE. IF DEPARTMENT CONCURS, I WOULD REQUEST THAT APPROPRIATE STEPS, IN CONJUNCTION WITH DOD AND CIA, BE TAKEN.
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BUNQUOTE KISSIMGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, INTERVENTION, INTELLIGENCE ASSESSMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE080378
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: ARA:CAR:MR. STRASSER
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760125-0917
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t197604100/aaaadifg.tel
Line Count: 163
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 NOV 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: WITHDRAWN <08 MAR 2004 by GarlanWA, REFER TO CIA>; WITHDRAWN <27 OCT 2004 by powellba, REFER TO CIA, DIA>; RELEASED <04 NOV 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <04 NOV 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: HEIGHTENED HAITIAN CONCERN OVER CUBAN TENSIONS AND PROPOSED STEPS TO DEAL WITH IT
TAGS: MARR, MASS, MILI, PINS, HA, CU, US
To: SANTO DOMINGO
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006